

BIBLICAL LITERACY

reading, understanding and appreciating the Word of God

PROVIDENCE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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BIBLICAL LITERACY
Reading, Understanding and appreciating the Word of God
Fall 2003

Providence Presbyterian Church
Biblical Literacy Class
Fall 2003

SCHEDULE

Class 1

Canonicity, part I

Introduction: Terms, OT beginnings:

How the Pentateuch was received

Class 2

Canonicity, part II

How the OT was received

Class 3

Canonicity, part III

How the NT was received

Class 4

Canonicity, part IV

How the NT was received

Class 6

The text

Translations, languages and genres

Class 7

An introduction to hermeneutics: inspiration and interpretation

Class 8

Hermeneutics, part II

How should I read and understand the Bible?

The cover design is taken from William Bennett's 1835 painting of Martin Luther, where the artist attempted to portray the exact moment when Luther understood "justification by faith."

Class 1: Canonicity, Part I
Old Testament Beginnings: How the Pentateuch was Received

I. Introduction

- The need for a standard Martin Luther’s struggle
- Goals for this class • Reading, understanding and appreciating God’s Word (its history, providence and preservation • “To equip the saints” (to answer anyone who might tell you that the Bible can’t be trusted.

II. Terminology

- Canon (*κανων*): from Greek word, “reed” (measure)
- Pentateuch (*tôrâh*):
 - “5 books”, the Law (Gen, Ex, Lev, Num and Deut.)
 - Moses the author
- Hebrew: Semitic language spoken by the Hebrews (OT written in Hebrew)
- Aramaic:
 - A west Semitic language closely related to Hebrew spoken in Aramania (became the common language spoken throughout Syria and neighboring nations)
 - When Jews went into Babylonian exile, they had to learn Aramaic
 - (Daniel, and parts of Ezekial are written in Aramaic)
- Greek:
 - Classical: formal Greek (Homer, Plato and Aristotle)
 - Koine (pronounced *coin-aye*): vernacular Greek (everyday “street Greek”)
NT written in Koine Greek
- Hellenism (Hellenistic, Hellenists, etc.): Study of Greek life and culture
- Septuagint (also referred to as LXX):
 - OT written in Greek (one of the Bibles that Jesus used)
 - Redacted in 2nd or 3rd century BC by 70 scholars (supposedly)

III. Historical Overview*

Old Testament History		World History
Periods	Main events	
4044-2234 BC	4004 The fall	
Period of Genesis (beginnings)	2348 The flood 2234 Dispersion of the races	2200 BC (?) Building of the first pyramid
2348-1706 BC Patriarchal Period	1921 Call of Abraham 1760 Jacob flees from Esau 1715 Joseph becomes Governor in Egypt 1706 Jacob’s family enters Egypt	
1706-1451 BC Descent into Egypt to the entrance into promised land	1635 Death of Joseph 1571 Birth of Moses 1491 The Exodus 1452 Joshua made leader 1451 Crossing of the Jordan 1451 Conquest of Canaan begins	Early Babylonian Empire

* Adapted from 4222b–Periods of Biblical History, *Thompson Chain Reference Bible*, page 1512.

IV. Contextual Concept of Canonicity: 1st: the need to understand the culture

- Definition: “Fundamental idea that a deity communicated a message in some form with man, and that he in turn accurately recorded it. This message was recognized by the community as divinely inspired and was received as a binding infallible rule of faith, practice and authority” (Vasholz, page 1). **Commonly held belief**
- Example: The Poem of Erra (dated anywhere from the 12th to 8th century B.C.):
“Kabti-ilian-Marduk the son of Dabibi (was) the composer of his tablet: (The deity) revealed it to him during the night, and in the morning, when he recited (it), he did not skip a simple (line) nor a single line (of his own) did he add to it. The scribe who commits it to memory shall escape the enemy country (and) shall be honored in his own country. In the sanctuary of (those) sages where they constantly mention my name, I will grant them wisdom. To the house in, which this table is placed...” (from L. Cagni, *The Poem of Erra*. Sources and Monographs on the Ancient Near East, vol. I. Malibu: Undena Publications, 1977). **(One of MANY examples)**



Table IV of the Poem of Erra: From Babylon, central Iraq, neo-Babylonian period, 626-539 BC (cat. D722). The Poem of Erra is a Babylonian composition of the 8th century BC, attributed to the scribe Kabti-ilani-Marduk (765-763 BC), but the copy in question is more recent by at least a century and a half.

(from: http://mv.vatican.va/3_EN/pages/x-Schede/MEZs/MEZs_Sala08_01_030.html)

- Ancient near east concept of canon (Vasholz, pages 3-4):
 1. A deity speaks, and his words are recorded
 2. The deity’s words are faithfully transmitted (**scribal fidelity**)
 3. Blessings are often promised, and curses are often threatened for those who honor or dishonor the words
 4. Words are preserved in a sacred place (**and guarded by scribes and priests**)

V. Old Testament Canonicity

- God worked within the cultural practices, but went above and beyond.
***No other literature says internally that it is the word of God.**
- The OT is self-attesting: it distinguishes itself in a superior way by providing internal witness to each of the four points of the concept of canon.

1. A deity speaks, and his words are recorded

- Exodus 19:9-11
 - God spoke to a multitude (not just to one individual) with an amazing display

- Deuteronomy 4:9-14
 - Pentateuch repeatedly asserts that the revel'n from God was "seen and heard"

2. Words are faithfully transmitted

- Exodus 32:15-16: 10 Commandments written by "the finger of God"
- Exodus 34:27-28: • Moses wrote what God told him (while Israel wandered thru the desert, Moses wrote the Pentateuch.
 - Inspired by God
 - Moses wrote history as well as law (also believed that he had notes from elders)
- Deut. 27:4-8: the Torah to be publicized

3. Blessings are often promised, and curses are often threatened for those who honor or dishonor the words

- Deut. 4:1-8: blessings and curses

4. Words are preserved in a sacred place

- Exodus 25:10-16: in Ark of the Covenant
- Exodus 40:20-2: In Ark of Covenant in the Holy of Holies

VI. Conclusion

- Deut. 31:9-13: The Pentateuch was written, preserved (multiple copies), and available
 - Served as a guide for faith, worship and life
- The Bible as unique over any other book: past, present or future
 - Other books may claim to be canon, but Bible outweighs them all
 - The Bible stands above
 - What Moses wrote is incomparable to all other religious writings
 - The Bible is a God initiated, God controled and God directed event.

Class 2: Canonicity, Part II

How the Old Testament was Received

Review:

- Moses wrote the Pentateuch as Israel traversed the desert of Sinai towards the Promised Land
- The Pentateuch (5 books) serves as a foundation for the Hebrew Scriptures
- To be canonical, any added writings had to:
 1. Come from an approved “Man of God” (prophet), and
 2. Could not contradict previously given canon (Scripture).
- New revelation (i.e. new documents claiming to be the “Word of the Lord”) was accompanied by signs and wonders.

I. Introduction for discussion

- Hindus acknowledge that their religion is the most authentic because it is the oldest religion on earth (with ancient manuscripts in Sanskrit). As a Christian, how would you respond?
- Sanskrit NOT the oldest form of writing (Hindus do, however, have literature dating back as far as 1400 BC)
- Christianity didn’t start in 60 AD with the followers of Christ first being called “Christians” in Antioch (Acts 11:26) as many say. Christianity REALLY started in Genesis 3:15 with the first prophecy of one who would crush the serpent’s head. Subsequent prophecies foretold that this would be the “messiah” (*messiah* is *christos* in Greek). Therefore Christianity really started in Genesis 3:15).

II. Terminology:

- **Ugaritic:** the Semitic language of ancient Ugarit (thought to be one of the languages that Moses spoke and wrote in).
Along with Egyptian and Hebrew
- **Cuneiform:** Script; system of writing using a wedge-shaped instrument into clay
(see appen. B)
- **Urtext:** the original text
(original ink, papyrus, etc. that the original author used)
- **Extant copies:**
Copies from the originals

- **Dead Sea Scrolls:** Extant writings found in the cave of Qumram discovered in 1947.
 - Dating from 300 BC to 68 AD
 - Over 500 individual works (consisting of multiple copies)
 - Documents in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek
 - Written on leather, papyrus and copper (all well preserved in the climate of the Dead Sea)
 - Among the documents there was found every book of the Old Testament (except Esther), which makes up about a third of all the literature found.

- **Translations:** Scripture translated into other languages
 - Septuagint: OT translated into Greek
 - Targum: OT translated into Aramaic
 - Peshitta: OT translated into SyrianAll translated as early as 200 BC

III. Historical Overview

	Judges 1394-1095 BC	United Kingdom 1095-975 BC	Divided Kingdom 975-587 BC	Exilic & post exilic periods 587-400 BC
Ruler/King	Gideon Eli	Saul David Solomon	Israel: Jeroboam (975) to Hoshea (730) Judah: Reroboam (975) to Zedekiah (598)	Captivity of Israel (721) Captivity of Judah (587) Ezra
Prophet		Samuel Nathan	Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos, Micah, Hosea, Joel, Isaiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Obadiah, Jeremiah	Ezekial, Zechariah, Daniel, Haggain, Malachi
Event(s)	Early Babylonian Empire	Syrian Kingdom Temple dedication	Rome founded	Sopherim Persian Empire Babylon captured by Cyrus
	1300 BC 1200 BC 1100 BC	1000 BC	900 BC 800 BC 700 BC	600 BC 500 BC 400 BC

IV. Emergence of the Scriptures (post Moses)

- A. Moses approved by God: Exodus 14:31
 People “put their trust in” Moses
- B. Moses’ authority passed to Joshua: Joshua 1:6-8 (Joshua wrote the book of Joshua, and it is believed that he wrote the epilogue to Deuteronomy (chapter 34)).
 - Joshua had been Moses’ protégé
 - Authority (and the Law) passed on to Joshua (a public event)
 - Just as people had put their faith in Moses, now they put their faith in Joshua
- C. In the Pentateuch, Moses establishes the test for recognizing true prophets that will communicate (and write) God’s word to the congregation.
 The *litmus test* for true prophets is “built in” to the Law.
 1. Not promoting idolatry: Deut. 13:1-4
 - Signs & wonders alone not a true test
 - Prophets MUST NOT promote idolatry
 2. Signs: Deut. 18:21-22 (evidence or proof of something; visible, verifiable, public)
 - a. Forms
 - Awesome feats/deeds (I Kings 13:4-5)
 - Impossible feats (Isaiah 7:11ff)
 - Predictions (I Sam. 2:34)
 - Short term: Authenticated the prophet so that his generation could put their faith in him
 - Long term: Fulfilled in the future; often messianic
 - b. Examples
 - From pre-monarchal period:
 - Samuel was a known prophet: I Sam. 9:6 (Samuel had the reputation as being a true prophet).
 - Samuel was attested as a true prophet: I Sam. 10:1-8
 - (From monarchial period: II Chron. 18)
 - (From exilic period: Jeremiah 28)

D. Prophets wrote, and their words were recorded:

- Prophets were public figures
- People put their faith in their words (and writings)
- That's why theologians call the time from 400 BC to John the Baptist as the "Silent years", because the Lord did not send His Word through any prophet. When John the Baptist came, the people recognized him as a true prophet.

1. The command to write: Jeremiah 30:1-2 (God tells Jeremiah to write)
2. "The words of a prophet were not preserved to see if his words would come true. They were maintained because his generation knew the man acted with the approval of God, and passed this information along" (Vasholz, pg. 50).
3. Books of Judges through Kings/Chronicles: "These histories serve as a self-authentication for the prophets' role in producing a canon for Israel according to the standard in Deuteronomy 13-18" (Vasholz, pg. 55).

a. I Sam. 10:25

Samuel writes and deposits his writing "before the Lord" (i.e. in the tabernacle along with the other sacred scriptures)

b. I Chron. 29:29-30; II Chron. 9:29-30

Other prophetic authors of the historical books

4. Prophetic books: written and received as Scripture: People recognized the true prophets and received their words as the Words of God.
 - a. Daniel 9:2: Daniel refers to Jeremiah's writings as scripture.
 - b. Jeremiah 26:18 (Micah lived 125 years prior to Jeremiah!): Jeremiah refers to Micah
5. Authors not traditionally known as "prophets", but who still had authentication of communicating God's Word because they spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. David is an example in 2 Sam 23:1-2.
Another example: Job is mentioned in the books of Ezekiel and James
6. False prophets may also have written, but their words were NOT to be heeded, saved, or recognized as canon.
 - a. Deut. 18:21-22
 - b. Ezekiel 13:9 Prophecies of false prophets NOT to be recorded

V. **Conclusion:** The people "put their faith" in the prophets

A. Exodus 14:31: people "put their faith" in Moses

B. Deut. 18:25: Moses commands people to "put their faith" in the true prophet to come

C. John 2:11: Disciples "put their faith" in Jesus

VI. Emergence of the Old Testament

A. Presence of scribes

1. Present in surrounding culture

a. Tell El-Amarna tablets (see. Apen. A)

b. Esther 3:12; 8:9 King of Persia had personal scribes and secretaries

2. Present in Israel

a. II Sam 8:15-17 (both palace and temple had scribes/recorders)

b. II Chron. 34:13 Scribes (in charge or canon) were from the tribe of Levi

B. Work of scribes

1. To make new copies that were accurate to the original
 - a. The Hebrew word for scribes is *sopherim*, which means “counters”
 - b. To check their work they would count the letters, words, columns, etc.
 - c. See fig. 2 of Apen. C for the example at the end of Deuteronomy where there is a list containing all the detailed (counted) information of the Pentateuch.
2. To provide copies for kings (Deut. 17:18-20; II Kings 11:12)
3. To provide copies for synagogues (Luke 4:17) [Jesus read in the synagogues.](#)

C. The transmission of Scripture by the scribes

1. First *school of scribes* was attributed to be founded by Ezra, the priest (existed from 400-200 BC). Jewish historians teach that the scribes copied from a master manuscript known as the *Scroll of Ezra*.
[Israel had the entire OT canon \(39 books\)](#)
[Septuagint translated around 200 BC](#)
2. Qumram: society/monastery that existed near the Dead Sea. This society was made up of scribes who continued the work of copying Scripture. Archaeologists date the society within the limits of 140 BC to 67 AD. It was the society at Qumram that guarded and copied the scrolls now known as the Dead Sea Scrolls.
[Many scholars think this is where John the Baptist was before his public ministry.](#)
3. School of Jewish scribes known as the Masoretes (500-950 AD). The Masoretes produced the Masoretic text.
4. Meticulous work of the scribes
 - a. Attitude: [Their] central purpose... was to preserve the Hebrew scriptures as it reached them. Their attitude might be summarized in the words of an eminent haggadist of Tiberias quoting the well-known scribe R. Meir (2nd century BC) regarding the work of copying scripture, “My son, be careful in your work, for your work is the work of heaven. Should you omit (even) one letter or add (even) one letter the whole world would be destroyed” (Vasholz, pg. 70).
 - b. Rules for copying. The scribes created the *Tractate of the Scribes*. This was a document listing the “rules” for proper copying procedure. Rules such as:
 - The kinds of writing material that could be used
 - Preparation of ink and parchment
 - Who may (or may not) copy
 - The need to copy from a copy (and not from memory)
 - Specific guidelines for margins, kerning, breadth of lines, size of characters, etc.
 - Rules for writing the name of God
 - Cross checking

- c. In copying, NO changes in the text were permitted
 - Scribes used margins to add commentary or offer suggestions for discrepancies (see appen. B, fig. 2)
 - Misspelled words were even copied!
- 3. What about errors?
 - a. Orthographic changes through time (see fig. 1, Appen. B)
 - We don't know what language Adam and Eve spoke
 - We do know that Abraham spoke a semitic language: either Hebrew or close to it.
 - Hebrew alphabet had slight changes through time
 - b. Character formations and misspelled words: Hebrew *waw* (ו), *yod* (י) and final *nu* (ן)
Easy to confuse the letters
- 4. Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls
 - Scrolls are 1000 years older than the oldest manuscripts that scholars originally had
 - Scriptural text of the Dead Sea scrolls and the manuscripts of the Masoretes are almost completely identical (tribute to scribal fidelity).

VII Conclusions

- A. ...It is really amazing that the Law has been constantly preserved for so many centuries, by a people as rebellious and impatient as this one... *Blaise Pascal, Pensées* (620)
In other words, why would the Jews meticulously preserve something so unflattering to them?
- B. The Jewish historian, Josephus, claimed there were 39 books (in three parts) that Titus carried from the Temple in Jerusalem when it was destroyed in 70 AD.
- C. Jesus gave further credence to the Old Testament in Luke 24:27, Luke 24:44 and John 1:45.
- D. A rule for faith and practice:
 - 1. True, we do not have the urtext in our possession today, but by God's Spirit and His providence, we do have the *inerrant Word of God* (just not the inerrant text of God).
 - 2. True, the texts that we do have may contain minor written errors, textual errors and punctuation errors, but the *message* has been preserved.

Class 3: Canonicity, Part III
How the New Testament was Received

I. Introduction: A group exercise

A. Read I Timothy 5:18

- What two books does Paul quote? _____ and _____
- If Paul calls these “Scripture”, what does this say about the early New Testament?

B. Read II Peter 3:15-16

- What does this tell us about the early New Testament?

C. Read Colossians 4:16-18 and 1 Thessalonians 5:27

- What do these verses say about the formation of the New Testament Scriptures?

II. The Process

A. As the time of the New Testament opens, the Jews were waiting for a word from the Lord (i.e. new revelation)

1. John the Baptist emerges as the last of the Old Testament prophets (Matthew 3:4)
2. John is asked if he is “the prophet” who was to come. He denies it (John 1:21)

B. Jesus emerges as *the prophet* who was to come

1. His prophesies are to be recorded (Matthew 24:34-35 – Jesus says His words [prophesies] will never pass away)
2. Jesus recognized by His disciples to be *the prophet*
 - a. John 1:45 (Philip tells Nathanael that he has found “the one Moses wrote about”)
 - b. Luke 24:19 (on the road to Emmaus)
3. Jesus understands that all the OT prophets pointed to Him (John 5:39)

C. The need to preserve Jesus’ words

1. Jesus ordains 12 men as apostles (Mark 3:13-19)
2. Sends the 12 out to preach the “Kingdom of God” (Luke 9:1-2)
 - a. They knew the message (Matthew 5 and Luke 6 are variations of a similar sermon)
 - b. Did they have notes?
3. Apostolic leadership
 - a. All 12 as eye-witnesses of Jesus’ ministry (Acts 1:15-26)
 - b. Apostles attested as “prophets” who performed signs and wonders (Acts 2:42-43)
 - c. Paul (Acts 26:12-18 – Paul’s conversion and call)
4. Witnesses wrote
 - a. Gospels
 - Matthew (one of the 12 who writes to Jews about being a disciple of Christ)
 - Mark (with Peter looking over his shoulder, Mark writes to a Gentiles audience)
 - Luke (a Gentile physician who was commissioned to write about Jesus)
 - John (Writes about knowing the Lord)
 - b. History of church: Acts (Lukes 2nd volume)

- c. Epistles
 - Pauline epistles (letters written by Paul: Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon)
 - General epistles:
 - Hebrews (unknown author)
 - James (written by James, one of Jesus' brothers)
 - 1&2 Peter (written by Peter)
 - 1-3 John (written by John)
 - Jude (written by Jude)
 - d. Revelation (apocalyptic literature written by John)
- D. How did the 27 books in our New Testament "make the canonical cut"?
 1. Internal factors (2 Peter 3:15, 1 Timothy 5:18, 2 Timothy 3:16)
 2. External factors (factors used by the early church fathers to evaluate the literature)
 - a. Apostolicity
 - The writings had to have the prophetic authority
 - There had to be a clear link to apostolic authority
 - (Here is where a book called The Shepherd of Herma drops out. It's a great work, but does not convey authority)
 - b. Orthodoxy
 - Must be related to what was already accepted (i.e. it couldn't contradict other previously accepted canon)
 - c. Catholicity
 - A consensus among the churches
 - A continual acceptance
- E. What about the Apocrypha?
 1. What is it? The Apocrypha is a collection of books that were written after Micah and before Matthew (i.e. during the intertestamental period). They consist of: 1&2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, The Letter of Jeremiah, Song of the Three Holy Children, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasseh and 1&2 Maccabees
 2. The Roman Catholic Church considered 11 of the 16 books to be canon at the Council of Trent in 1546.
 3. Protestants reject the Apocrypha as canon due to the following (taken from the *Thompson Chain Reference Bible*, pg. 1504):
 - They were never quoted by Jesus (and doubtful that the apostles ever alluded to them)
 - The majority of early church fathers considered them uninspired
 - None of these books appeared in the Hebrew canon
 - The inferior quality of most of the writings, as compared with the canonical books, stamps them as unworthy of a place in the sacred Scriptures
- F. Once literature was accepted as Scripture, it was preserved (See Appen. C)
 1. Copied
 2. Preserved
 3. Bound into volumes
- G. Translated into other languages and eventually printed (see Appen. D)

Class 4: Canonicity, Part III

How the Scriptures were translated into my modern English Bible

“I wish that the Scriptures might be translated into all languages, so that not only the Scots and the Irish, but also the Turk and the Saracen might read them as he follows his plough, the weaver hum them to the tune of his shuttle, the traveller beguile the weariness of his journey with their stories.”

-Erasmus of Rotterdam (1467-1536)

I. Introduction

- Exercise 1: In the original NT manuscripts, to economize ink and parchments, writers would write in all capital letters and eliminate spaces and punctuation. To get a feel for the work of the translators, consider Ephesians 4:28 (below), and add the appropriate punctuation.

HEWHOHASBEENSTEALINGMUSTSTEALNOLONGERHEMUSTWORKDO-
INGSOMETHINGUSEFULWITHHISOWNHANDSTHATHEMAYHAVESOMET
HINGTOSHAREWITHTHOSEINNEED.

- Exercise 2: Below Hebrews 11:1-2 is printed in the American Standard Version and the King James Version. Translate them into a language that an average first grader could understand.

ASV: Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen. For therein the elders had witness borne to them.

KJV: Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report.

Your translation:

II. The Process of translation

A. Jerome (about 345-420)

1. Parts of the Bible had been translated into Latin by African missionaries (using the Septuagint) as early as 150 AD. Such translations were used, but they were not as accurate.
2. Commissioned by the Roman Catholic Church to translate the Bible into Latin using the original languages.
3. *“I am not so stupid as to think that any of the Lord’s words either need correcting or are not divinely inspired; but the Latin manuscripts of the Scriptures are proved faulty by the variations which are found in all of them. My aim has been to restore them to the form of the Greek original...”* Jerome, Letters XXVII

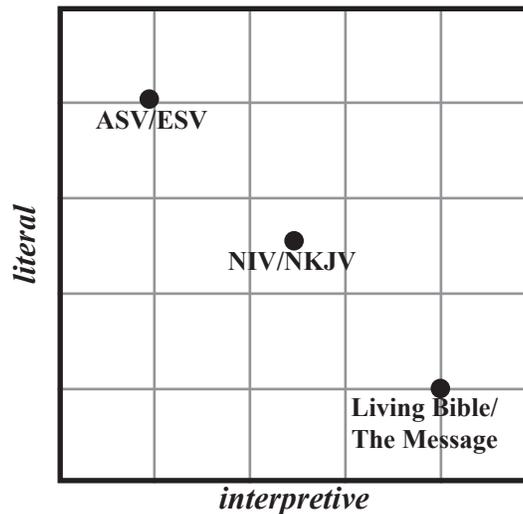
B. John Wycliff (about 1329-1384): One of the first to translate the Bible into English

III. Philosophy of Translation

- A. **Literal:** word for word translation (goal: to achieve an accurate *translation*)
1. pros: word and word order are very accurate
 2. cons: the idea (meaning) of a passage can be lost – especially with figures of speech; the text does not read well.
- B. **Interpretative:** interpretive translation (goal: to achieve an accurate *meaning*)
1. pros: easier to read and understand
 2. cons: precise wording is lost (which prevents our understanding and appreciating the original culture who received the text).
- C. Example: Exodus 34:6

Literal: And the LORD passed before his face, and called: LORD, LORD, the God compassionate and gracious, long of nose, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth.

Interpretive: And the Lord passed in front of him, and he called out, “The Lord, the Lord: a God who is merciful and gracious; extremely patient, and full of grace and truth.”



- D. Modern translations

Appendix A

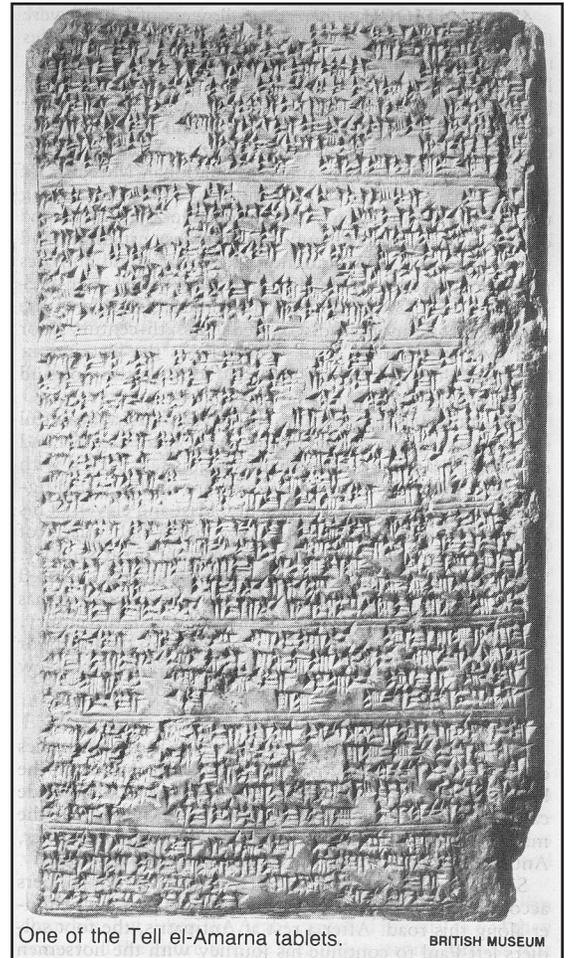
Archaeological finds corresponding to the Conquest of Canaan

Tell El-Amarna: A great number of stone tablets from the royal archives of Amarna were uncovered by a peasant woman who was farming. Amarna is the remains of the home of Pharaoh Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV, later known as Akhenaton. 350 cuneiform tablets were recovered, many of which were personal letters from the surrounding regions of Babylonia, Phoenicia, Mitanni, Syria, and Palestine. These letters reveal that Palestine was undergoing a great deal of turbulence during the time of 1400 BC, Joshua's conquest. The governor of Gezer wrote the following:

*Let my lord, the king, the sun in heaven, take heed unto his land, for the **Khabiri*** are mighty against us; and let the king, my lord, stretch out his hand unto me and let him deliver me from their hands, so that they may not make an end of us.*

A large number of letters from the governor of Jerusalem, Abdi-Heba, plea for help:

*The king my lord, say. Thus saith Abdi-Heba, thy servant. At the feet of the King, my lord, seven times and seven times I prostrate myself... The whole land of the King has revolted. There is not one governor that is loyal to the King, all have rebelled. May the King harken unto Abdi-Heba and send troops, for if no troops come this year, the whole territory of my lord the King will be lost. The Habiru are capturing the fortresses of the King. May the King care for his land. The **Habiru*** are taking the cities of the King... If there are no archers this year, then let the King send a deputy that he may take me to himself together with my brothers and we die with the king, our Lord.*



One of the Tell el-Amarna tablets.

BRITISH MUSEUM

* Most scholars regard the *Khabiri* (*Habiru* a variation of the word) as the Hebrews. This coincides with the 1400 BC date of Joshua's conquest. Interestingly, we now seem to have two accounts of the Hebrew conquest; that of Joshua and that of his enemies.

This text is from <http://informationcentre.tripod.com/bibleproof.html>.

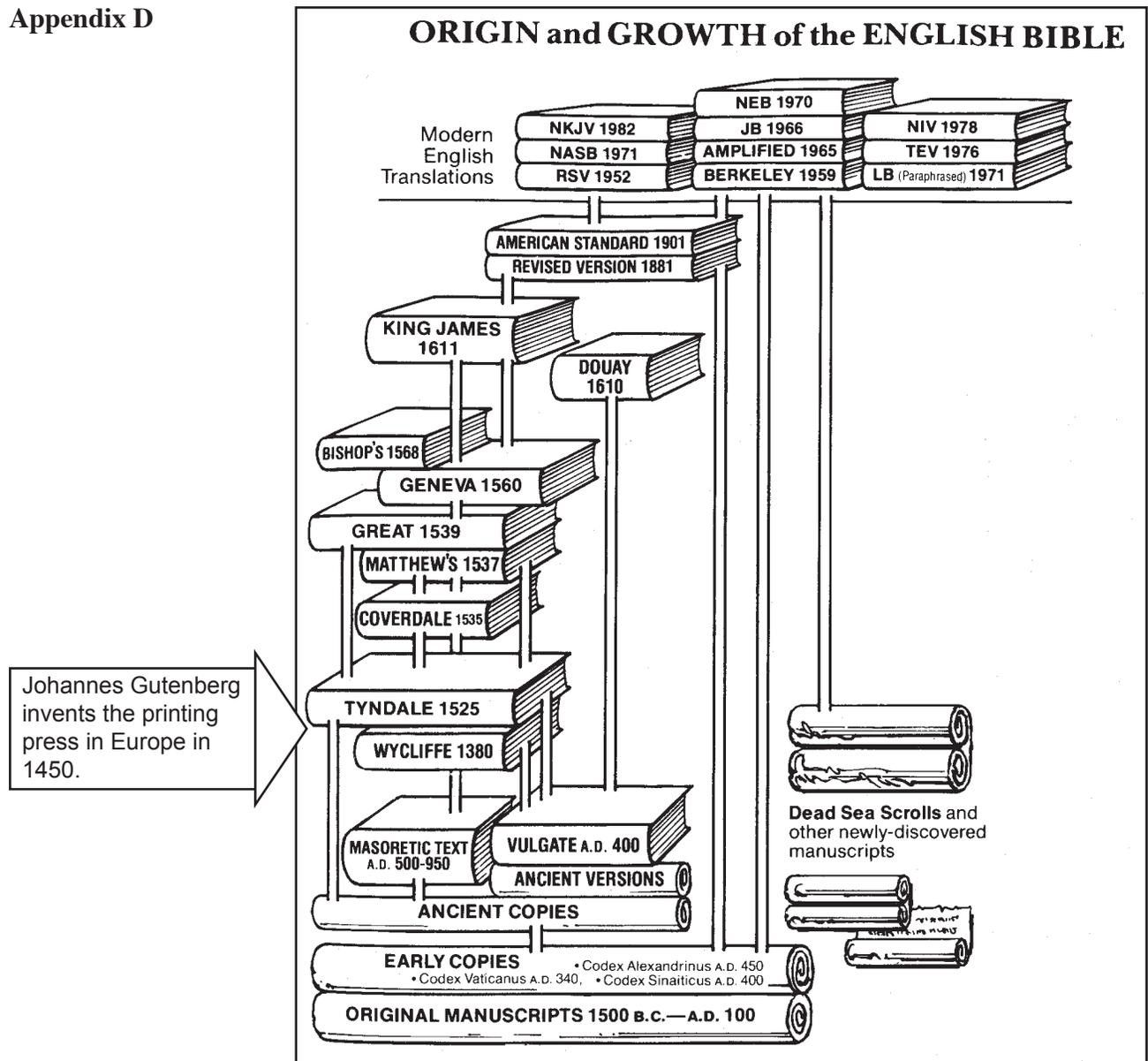
Picture of tablet taken from *Archaeological Supplements, Thompson Chain Reference Bible*. pg. 1633

Appendix C

Author/ Book	Date written	Earliest copies	Time gap	No. of copies	Percent accuracy of availab. MSS
Homer, <u>Iliad</u>	800 B.C.	c. A.D.1250	c. 2050 y.	1 compl., 643 fragm.	95
Sophocle. (Phil.)	496-406 B.C.	c. A.D. 750-850	c. 1250 y.	1	
Herodot. <u>History</u>	480-425 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1350 y.	8	
Thucy- dides, <u>History</u>	460 -400 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1300 y.	8	
Plato	400 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1300 y.	7	
Demos- thenes	300 B.C.	c. A.D. 1100	c. 1400 y.	200	
Caesar, <u>Gallic Wars</u>	100-44 B.C. (58 B.C. ff)	c. A.D. 900	c. 1000	10 good MS, some fragm.	
Livy, <u>History of Rome</u>	59 B.C.- A.D. 17	c. 370 A.D. (part.), mostly A.D. 950	c. 400 y. c. 1000 y.	1 partial, 19 copies	
Tacitus, <u>Annals</u>	A.D. 55- 130 (A.D. 100)	c. A.D. 1100	c. 1000 y.	20	
Pliny Secundus <u>Natural History</u>	A.D. 61- 113	c. A.D. 850	c. 750 y.	7	
New Testa- ment	A.D. 50- 90	c. 125 (fragm.) c. 200 (books) c. 250 (most of N.T.) c. 325 (complete N.T.)	c. 50 y. c. 100 y. c. 150 y. c. 225 y.	5465 50 compl. 39 papyr.	98

cf. N.L. GEISLER, W.E. NIX, A GENERAL INTRO TO THE BIBLE, CHICAGO: MOODY, 1986
 & modifications & additions H.F. BAYER, 1994

Appendix D



* This chart is taken from #4220—Origin and Growth of the English Bible, *Thompson Chain Reference Bible*, page 1505.

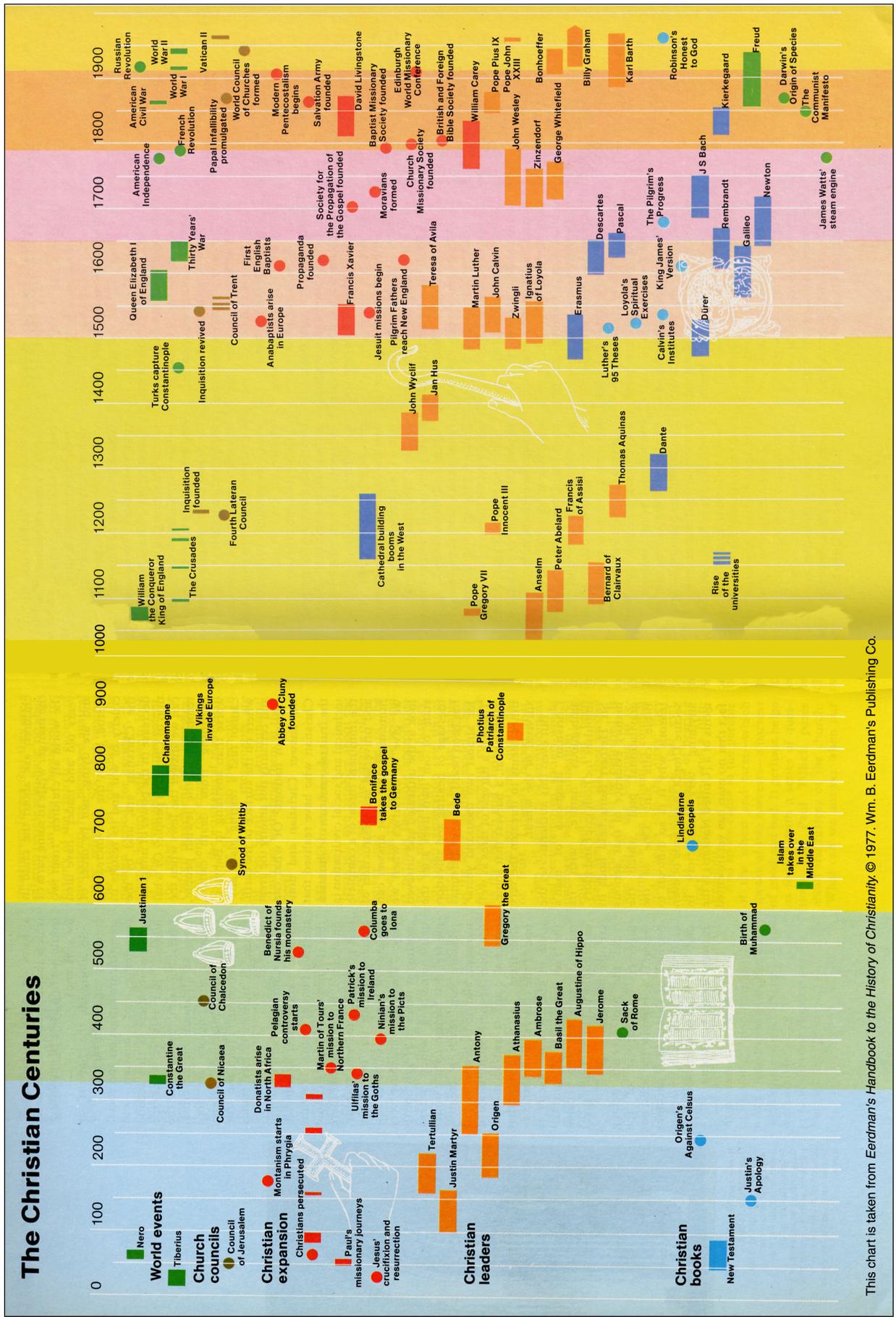
Some explanation of terminology:

Vulgate: Translation of the Bible into Latin (by St. Jerome)

Wycliffe: First English translation of the Bible by Jon Wycliffe.

Tyndale: First printed version of the English Bible. Named after William Tyndale, who translated it.

“Tyndale suffered shipwreck, loss of manuscripts, pursuit by secret agents, betrayal by friends and pirated edition in his efforts to publish the Bible in English” (Eerdman’s, pg. 370).



This chart is taken from Eerdman's Handbook to the History of Christianity. © 1977. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

The Song of Solomon Illustrated (For our literalist friends.)

How beautiful you are, my darling.

How beautiful you are!

...Your eyes are like doves behind your veil...

...Your hair is like a flock of goats...

...Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes...

...Your lips are like a scarlet thread...

...Your temples are like a slice of pomegranate...

...Your neck is like the tower of David... built with rows of stones on which are hung a thousand shields...

Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle that feed among the siles...

Your lips, my bride, are like honey... honey and milk are under your tongue,

And the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon...

...your navel is a round goblet...

Your belly is like a heap of wheat...

...your nose is like the tower of Lebanon, which faces toward Demascus...??

...from Song of Solomon Chapters four and seven.

